

# 2015

ANNUAL  
REPORT



**WESTERN  
RESOURCE  
ADVOCATES**





## From the President

At my core, I am inspired by nature. I believe that from the Kaibab Limestone to the Vishnu Schist at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, from the rushing rapids and lazy flatwater of the Green River to the rocky outcroppings and twisted bristlecone pines high in the Rocky Mountains, we find evidence of a force more powerful than ourselves. I believe that we are the stewards of the earth and that it is our obligation to repair the damage that we have, both knowingly and unknowingly, inflicted on our home.

Over the years, our collective stewardship has faltered. Climate change caused by human activity has become the defining environmental challenge of the century, with global temperatures and carbon dioxide levels reaching alarming heights last year. In 2015, water levels in Lake Mead dropped to their lowest levels since the reservoir was first being filled in the 1930s. These troubling milestones show the challenges that Western Resource Advocates is addressing as we strive to protect rivers, communities, and water supplies from the impacts of climate change in an already-arid environment.

But when I look back on the work that Western Resource Advocates has done over the past year to repair this damage and to protect our home, I am filled with pride and hope. Together, we have won victories that will cut carbon emissions; advanced clean energy policies; kept clean water in rivers, streams, and lakes; and protected our most treasured landscapes.

Our programs to advance clean energy and reduce carbon emissions, and our ability to protect the West's water, were proven as we achieved numerous successes. Our work prevents air pollution and improves air quality, keeps water in rivers for people and wildlife alike, and preserves the iconic landscapes that make the

West unique. To highlight just a handful of our 2015 accomplishments:

- In New Mexico, we helped secure a legal settlement that will result in the closure of two coal-fired generating units.
- In Colorado, we helped develop the state's first water plan, and won instream water rights in the San Miguel and Dolores rivers.
- And in Utah, because of our efforts, a crude oil refinery will finally be required to reduce its air pollution and a tar sands mine, which we continue to oppose, will be required to meet air and water quality requirements, if it ever gets off the ground.

These are just a few of our many victories that have improved the quality of life for people and wildlife, and put the West on a path towards a robust clean energy economy, sustainable use of our limited water supplies, and preservation of public lands for all.

These accomplishments are encouraging steps in the right direction. But there is more work to be done, and we can't do it alone. Looking ahead, I am excited to work with diverse partners, elected leaders, government officials, and you to implement our vision for the West. We hope you'll join us in protecting the West so that future generations have a window to the past, a place to witness the power of nature, and space for quiet contemplation and rejuvenation of the soul.




Jon Goldin-Dubois  
President





# Advancing Clean Energy



A photograph of solar panels reflecting sunset light on the Front Range, Colorado. The solar panels are in the foreground, angled towards the viewer. They are reflecting the warm, orange, and yellow light of the setting sun. In the background, the silhouette of the Front Range mountains is visible against a sky filled with dramatic, dark clouds. The overall scene is a mix of blue, orange, and yellow tones, creating a serene yet powerful atmosphere.

Climate change that is caused by greenhouse gas pollution from the production and burning of fossil fuels will take a hard toll on the mountain and desert West unless we act now. Our Clean Energy Program advocates for increased use of the West's natural bounty of renewable energy resources and for improved energy efficiency to reduce carbon pollution from electricity production. By transitioning the Interior West to clean power, we help prevent catastrophic climate change, improve air quality, and protect public health.

# Results

## Reduced Coal-Fired Power Generation in New Mexico

The San Juan Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant, is one of the largest sources of air pollution in New Mexico and also impacts Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado. WRA joined other parties in a legal settlement that paves the way for Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) to shut down two of the power plant's four coal-fired generating units by December 2017. The agreement also sets the stage for further unit closures in 2022 and positions PNM for compliance with EPA's Clean Power Plan.

## Helped Colorado Adopt First-Ever Recycled Energy Program

WRA made improvements to a new "recycled energy" program to incentivize the installation and use of recycled energy in Colorado. Energy recycling reclaims waste heat from businesses, like bakeries and steel mills, to produce electricity with zero additional emissions. The Colorado Public Utilities Commission has adopted a program that allows large businesses to participate in energy recycling thanks to compelling evidence from WRA.



## Defeated a Lawsuit Challenging Colorado's Renewable Energy Standard

WRA helped to defend Colorado's Renewable Energy Standard from legal attacks by coal-promoting organizations. The standard has successfully reduced air pollution, decreased emissions that cause climate change, and fostered a clean energy economy within the state. The victory reaches beyond Colorado, setting a legal precedent that may affect numerous other state renewable energy standards.



# Conserving Western Lands







The stunning landscapes of the West are legendary, cherished by residents and visitors alike. But past environmental damage and the current impacts of poorly planned energy developments are degrading lands, contributing to the decline in populations of many wildlife species, and damaging air and water. The commercial development of shale gas and oil, combined with the threat of oil shale and tar sands extraction, further imperils land, water, wildlife, and communities. Climate change is a growing threat we must curb.

At WRA, we are committed to safeguarding the ecological integrity of our treasured public lands and wildlife for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.



# Results

## **Secured Stronger Rules for Oil and Gas Violations in Colorado**

The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission has finalized rules for increased penalties and new mandatory fines for industry violations that impact or threaten human health, safety, or the environment. The new regulations, supported by WRA, represent the first increase in fines for oil and gas violations in decades and are a huge improvement on the prior rules.

## **Protected Water, Wildlife, and Public Lands from Oil and Gas Drilling**

WRA joined other groups to defend the Bureau of Land Management's new regulations governing aspects of oil and gas extraction, including well integrity and waste management. The new rules will reduce chemical spills, groundwater contamination, and other accidents.



## Protected Water Quality and Roadless Areas in Utah

WRA helped to protect the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest from illegal off-road vehicles, whose use has resulted in erosion and vegetation loss. With our input, the U.S. Forest Service released the final version of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest's Ogden Ranger District Travel Plan, which commits to improved signage. The plan recognizes the importance of protecting water quality and habitat for plants and animals, and sets aside areas where motorized vehicles will not be permitted.

## Convinced Utah to Require Compliance with Air Regulations and Water Monitoring for Tar Sands Mines

WRA helped ensure that the PR Spring mine must comply with EPA's air quality regulations and water monitoring as conditions of the mine proceeding to process tar sands. The PR Spring mine is located in the Book Cliffs of eastern Utah, a biologically, geologically, and recreationally rich area. Tar sands development using strip mines damages the land, destroys wildlife habitat, pollutes air, leaves a legacy of toxic waste, accelerates climate change, and contaminates water. Wildlife, hunters, recreationists, and local ranchers need better protections, and the new permit is more stringent thanks to our advocacy.



# Ensuring Healthy Rivers







Water, or more often the lack thereof, is a defining feature of the landscape, history, and culture of the West. Rivers and lakes in the Intermountain West are stressed due to increasing population demands, drought, and climate change. Western Resource Advocates works with communities and state leaders to advance smarter management of limited water supplies to support our rivers and lakes, wildlife, recreation, agriculture, and community needs.

Sandhill crane courtship at Monte Vista  
National Wildlife Refuge, Colorado.



Much-needed rain approaches Horseshoe Bend, Arizona.

# Results



"Frozen dream." Dream Lake at Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado.

## Helped Shape Colorado's First Water Plan, Advancing Water Conservation and Healthy Rivers

After two years of advocacy, the Colorado Water Plan was adopted, the first state plan addressing water management. WRA was instrumental to ensuring that this plan sets the first-ever statewide water conservation goal, proposes significant annual funding for healthy rivers, and makes new large dams and diversions highly unlikely.



Wood duck in the Front  
Range, Colorado.



## Helped Uphold Protection for Rivers and Streams in Colorado

The San Miguel and other rivers will benefit from WRA's work. The Colorado Supreme Court rendered a landmark decision upholding the instream water right for the San Miguel River. WRA teamed with state agency staff on the legal defense for this right. The ruling not only protects the distinctive San Miguel, but also ensures that we have a vital tool—the state's instream flow program—to leave a legacy of healthy rivers throughout Colorado.

## Protected Fish in the Dolores River

Thanks to the work of WRA and partner groups, the Colorado Water Conservation Board rendered a unanimous decision to seek a water right on the Dolores River to protect fish and wildlife, securing water on a 33-mile river stretch between its confluence with the San Miguel and the town of Gateway, Colorado. This is the largest instream flow protection on the river to date, and it will help prevent three types of native fish in the Dolores River from becoming threatened or endangered species.

Swollen creek at Eldorado Canyon State Park, Colorado.



# Improving Air Quality in Utah



Residents of Utah's Wasatch Front suffer from having some of the poorest air quality in the nation. Air pollution in Utah's most populous areas results in higher rates of heart attacks and strokes, causes thousands of premature deaths, and permanently damages children's lungs. Western Resource Advocates works to improve air quality and help the region comply with the national air quality standards to protect public health.



# Results

## **Ensured Utah Refinery Must Comply with Tougher Clean Air Act Permit**

Thanks to WRA, the Tesoro Refinery, which processes crude oil, will be required to comply with stricter air quality permit conditions. This positive change for Utah's air came in response to a lawsuit we brought on behalf of partners.

## **Protected Utah Air Quality from Kennecott Rock Crushing Plant**

WRA and partners celebrated Kennecott Copper's decision to abandon plans to construct a new rock crusher plant. The plant would have added 33 tons of PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) and 267 tons of PM10 (coarse particulate matter) emissions per year to the Salt Lake City area, making air quality even worse. WRA, representing partnering groups, had challenged construction of the plant.



# 2015

D O N O R S

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"Snowing." Snow geese take off at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico.



# 2015

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## Donor Profile: Helen Gemmill

### How were you introduced to Western Resource Advocates?

Originally, Bryan Morgan, a longtime board member of WRA, introduced me because of our shared interest in water issues in Colorado.

### Why do you support WRA?

WRA is doing exemplary work to move the needle on how Coloradans of all stripes think about the water we have and how best to use it. WRA's depth of expertise on both the science and the policy is a powerful combination, and knowing how to connect that knowledge to people and action is a rare gift. It's a pleasure to watch the organization dig into such important topics with such skill.

### Why is conservation important to you?

I love this planet, and every day am in awe of its beauty and the infinite wisdom of evolution. We stand at a pivotal watershed in the course of human events, one where our actions can either drive the planet toward a future where we can all thrive, or one that will be more inhospitable to complex life. I want to be able to tell future generations that I did everything in my power to help preserve the natural rhythms and beauty of our shared home.

### Where are you from?

I was born and raised in the beautiful state of New Hampshire, a part of the world with a very different water situation than here in the arid West. Both Colorado and New Hampshire enjoy gorgeous mountain ranges and fantastic access to nature.

### What do you enjoy most about the West or what is your favorite place in the West?

I love the entrepreneurial spirit and the culture of meritocracy that thrives here.

### What would you like people to know about WRA?

WRA is building upon its many successful years of working with data on the important environmental issues here, and moving to a place where it can connect more and more people to that information.

### Do you have a quote that inspires you?

Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you.

—Wendell Berry



“ We stand at a pivotal watershed in the course of human events, one where our actions can either drive the planet toward a future where we can all thrive, or one that will be more inhospitable to complex life. ”





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Gambel's quail at Bosque del Apache  
National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico.

## Donor Profile: Ron Binz

### How were you introduced to Western Resource Advocates?

I first knew WRA when it was “Land and Water Fund of the Rockies” (LAW Fund). At the time I was Colorado’s Utility Consumer Advocate. I must admit that my environmental side wasn’t very developed then—I was more concerned about consumer issues and there seemed to be a tension with “environmentalism.” Thanks, in part, to the talented people at WRA (Kelley, Bruce, Jim, John, Erik, and Rick), I learned that there is no conflict: The consumer interest in energy is incomplete without giving full attention to the environmental impact of how we make and use energy.

### Why do you support WRA?

There are lots of possible levels to this answer. I am motivated by the threat of climate change in most everything I do and every organization I support. I am confident we can avoid the greatest damage by transforming the way we make and use energy. In my professional career, the support of WRA was essential when I chaired the Public Utilities Commission for Colorado Governor Bill Ritter. We accomplished many great things in those years, and WRA was a huge component of our success. I want WRA to achieve many more victories.

### Why is conservation important to you?

I’m not religious or even spiritual. But I know that existence is inherently social, and our species’ continued evolution relies on societal values. It is wrong to use any natural resource in an unsustainable way, because that will disadvantage other beings, present or future.

### Where are you from?

Geographically, I come from Little Rock, Arkansas, where my entire extended family still lives. I was educated in college by Jesuits in St. Louis, where I met my life partner, Mary Donahue, whom I followed to Denver. In another sense, I am from philosophy and mathematics, the two educational interests that have greatly shaped me.

### What do you enjoy most about the West or what is your favorite place in the West?

I appreciate the element of self-reliance that the West instills. Of all the beautiful places, the top one might be Canyonlands National Park, followed closely by many others. Straying outside the WRA footprint, Point Reyes National Seashore is one of my favorite places on earth.

### What would you like people to know about WRA?

WRA is a pragmatic advocate for the West’s natural resources. The organization plays mainly an “inside” game, providing policy makers with a sound basis for making the correct policy and economic decisions about land, water, and energy. The result has been steady progress, making our life in the West more sustainable.

### Do you have a quote that inspires you?

I have two:

“The Earth, like the sun, like the air, belongs to everyone ... and to no one.” —Edward Abbey

AND

“Don’t believe everything you think.”





## Donor Profile: Bill Mitchell

*Shortly before this annual report was sent to print, we received the very sad news that Bill Mitchell had passed away at his home in Washington State. Bill was a wonderful WRA board member and a committed conservationist. We share this profile with you because we believe you will appreciate learning about Bill's life and his dedication to the West. We are thankful for the time we had with Bill. We will remember Bill, and we will miss him.*

### **How were you introduced to Western Resource Advocates?**

In early 2001, I attended a meeting in Denver on energy development in the Rockies. I met Bruce Driver, then executive director of WRA. The people attending represented a broad array of conservation and agricultural groups concerned about the Cheney energy proposal. Subsequently, WRA became the financial home for the Rocky Mountain Energy Campaign (RMEC). WRA handled income and expenditures for the group seamlessly, and RMEC became one of the most effective, transparent resource-based networks in the West. Later, I met Bryan Morgan, a current WRA board member. We worked together at another conservation organization. He asked me to consider becoming a WRA board member. After meeting WRA President Jon Goldin-Dubois and board member Patrick de Freitas, I was convinced that WRA was the type of conservation organization on whose board I would like to serve.

### **Why do you support WRA?**

WRA maintains a sense of scientific integrity in its approach to energy, water, and land use issues. WRA provides the critical tools that enable the conservation community to promote positive change in the increasingly complicated Western landscape.

### **Why is conservation important to you?**

I trained under Starker Leopold, Aldo's son, at Berkeley in the late 1960s. My experiences there led me to a career in the nonprofit world, predominantly working on conservation issues in western North America.

### **Where are you from?**

I was born in northern Utah and raised primarily in the western suburbs of Denver.

### **What do you enjoy most about the West or what is your favorite place in the West?**

For a period of time, I worked for an organization of ranchers in southeast Montana, trying to protect their ranching communities from the onslaught of coal development in the northern plains. I grew to love this part of the West, its people and its landscape. I spend time every fall bird hunting in Montana.

### **What would you like people to know about WRA?**

The integrity of WRA's scientific approach to water, energy, and land use issues across the Intermountain West provides a real formula for positive change. Its enhanced approach to communicating the purpose and results of its work is invaluable in our increasingly complex part of the West.

### **Do you have a quote that inspires you?**

"One cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is the native home of hope. When it fully learns that cooperation, not rugged individualism, is the quality that most characterizes and preserves it, then it will have achieved itself and outlived its origins. Then it has a chance to create a society to match its scenery."  
—Wallace Stegner



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Ann Rhodes  
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Nikki Riedt  
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David Rose and Ceil Murray  
Diane Rosenthal  
Louis and Mary Rozaklis  
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Jacqueline Russell  
Lisa Rutherford  
Michael Sawyer  
Joel Sayres  
Mark Schlegel  
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Steve and Darla Schueth  
Robin Seidner  
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## Western Resource Advocates In The News

Regional and national media  
is increasingly looking to  
Western Resource Advocates  
as a primary voice on land, air,  
and water issues in the West.



Bobcat's piercing look, northern Montana.

## Deseret News

April 27, 2015

### **Suit challenges HollyFrontier Refinery expansion**

"We have all felt our eyes and lungs burn and worried about the health of our children and parents. Utah should not permit another new project that will result in a major increase in air pollution and make this bad situation worse," said Joro Walker, lead attorney on the case and Western Resource Advocate's Utah director.



June 24, 2015

### **Lake Mead Sinks to Record Low, Risking Water Shortage**

"We need to grow in a way that recognizes that we have a limited water supply. That means that all of the new homes that are built should not be importing landscaping preferences from Kentucky or the Midwest," Drew Beckwith said.



June 28, 2015

### **My Turn: We can't keep taking more than the Colorado River has to offer. But there are ways to fix the imbalance** *(OpEd from Jon Goldin-Dubois)*

"We have failed to take obvious steps that could help maintain the health of the river and a reliable water delivery system. With Lake Mead at critically low levels, we cannot ignore it any longer. Praying for rain or one or two wet years won't solve the problem."



September 13, 2015

### **WRA backs San Juan agreement** *(OpEd by Steve Michel)*

WRA's goal throughout the San Juan case has been to reduce PNM's reliance on dirty power and advance its use of clean energy as quickly as possible. We believe the agreement before the PRC accomplishes this goal in a way that best protects our environment and addresses the many competing interests and concerns surrounding San Juan Generating Station.



November 19, 2015

## Colorado's Leading Conservation Voices Say Water Plan is Historic Step Forward

"We commend the Governor and CWCB for committing to water conservation in such a common-sense manner. Making better use of the water we already have is the cheapest, fastest and most flexible way to meet new demands—it's just a no-brainer."

—Bart Miller, Water Policy Director,  
Western Resource Advocates

## THE DENVER POST

November 19, 2015

### Colorado floats unprecedented plan to tackle water challenges

The Colorado Water Plan lays out "a new path for water management, a chance to change the status quo approaches," Western Resources Advocates water program director Bart Miller said. "This will help us be better prepared for the future."

## THE DAILY SENTINEL

April 5, 2015

### Rain barrels: an idea whose time has come

"Someone with a rain barrel develops a water cycle awareness and understanding that water is limited," Beckwith wrote. "Ultimately, this transforms into a conservation mindset and appreciation not to waste this precious resource."



## Featured Artist: Fernando Boza

I've had my eye on Fernando Boza's work for several years. I rely on his work to mentally transport me to the wonderful places he visits. You'll see that he provides us with no shortage of armchair travel and for that we can be thankful. The photos Fernando presents in this report span Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming. I am delighted that he accepted our offer to be Western Resource Advocates' featured annual report photographer.

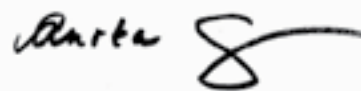
Fernando is an award-winning photographer, who resides in Boulder, Colorado, with his wife and two daughters. He believes in ancient knowledge that a deep connection with the environment is essential to experience a greater sense of our own true nature. Further, he believes that being fully present in the moment is a key to fulfillment, and photography is a way to capture and share those moments and images.

Fernando has had the opportunity to do photography in many places around the world, ranging from South America to Australia. However, living in the Western United States, he does not have to go too far from home to find inspiration. Whether in the mountains of Colorado and Wyoming, or the deserts and sandstone formations in Utah and Arizona, he often finds himself hiking up while most people are going down—before sunset—and hiking down while most people are going up—after sunrise. In between, sunsets, sunrises, and beautiful starry

skies offer plenty of opportunities to experience nature in our Western states at its best.

In his words, “For me, photography is not a profession, but rather a passion, and a way to connect with places and wildlife in a very personal way. Planning an image often requires developing knowledge and understanding of the location and elements—the light, stars, weather, animal behavior, and more. The process of exploring an area, observing and understanding the elements and ultimately creating an image is extremely rewarding. With admiration and respect for Nature, doing all of that while helping conserve such wonderful places is a responsibility, and often requires a bit of planning. As a parent, I hope to instill this love and respect for Nature in my children—and like many other things, often the best way to do that is through action.”

If you would like to see more of Fernando's work, you can visit his Facebook page Fernando Boza Photography, or his Instagram gallery @ferbozaphoto. He can be reached at ferbozaphoto@gmail.com.



Anita Schwartz  
Vice President of Development,  
Marketing, and Program Administration

“ For me, photography is not a profession, but rather a passion, and a way to connect with places and wildlife in a very personal way. ”





## Where We Work

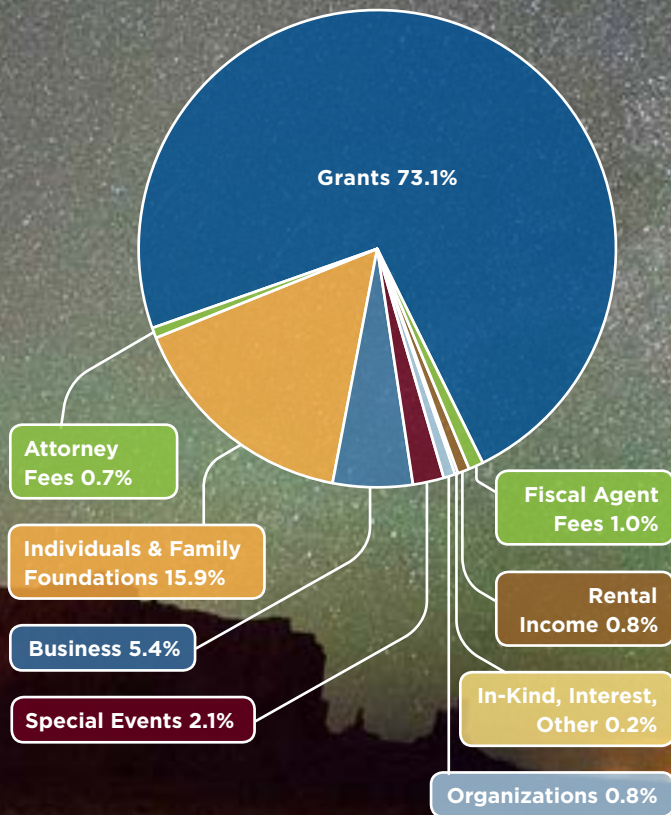
Western Resource Advocates works across the Interior West, with offices in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Our headquarters are in Boulder, Colorado.



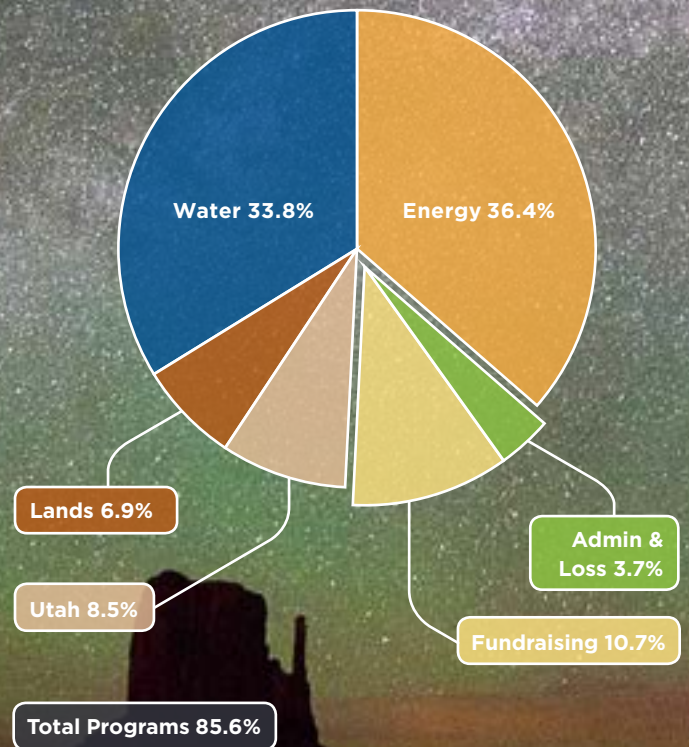
# 2015

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES





<b>Revenue</b>	Grants	3,582,486
	Individuals and Family Foundations	780,364
	Endowment	41,090
	Organizations	35,704
	Attorney Fees	1,264
	Interest Income	3,822
	Other	-
	Government	264,789
	Business	102,523
	In-Kind	6,905
	Rental Income	38,288
	Fiscal Agent Fees	46,826

<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>4,904,061</b>
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<b>Expenses</b>	Expenses by Program	
	Energy	1,501,739
	Lands	284,152
	Water	1,394,250
	Utah	351,625

<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>3,531,766</b>
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Supporting Services	
Development	441,091
Administration	152,529
Loss	-

<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 4,125,386</b>
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Change in Net Assets	778,675
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$ 5,691,110
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 6,469,785



## Board of Directors, 2015

Partick de Freitas	Chair	Salt Lake City, UT
David Robertson	Vice Chair	Boulder, CO
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Bill Mitchell		Vashon Island, WA
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## Staff, 2015

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Steven Michel	Energy Program Chief Counsel
Bart Miller	Water Program Director
Glenda Murphy	Administrative Assistant
Regina Nichols	Paralegal/Office Manager
John Nielsen	Energy Program Director
Amelia Nuding	Water/Energy Analyst
Brian Ortiz	Administration Assistant
Erin Overturf	Energy Attorney
Christine Quenroe	Bookkeeper and Accounting Assistant

Anita Schwartz	Vice President of Development, Marketing, and Program Administration
Linda Stitzer	Arizona Senior Water Policy Advisor
Stacy Tellinghuisen	Senior Energy/Water Policy Analyst
Nicole Theerasatiankul	Grants and Corporate Giving Manager
Rick Trilsch	Vice President of Finance and Administration
Paige Vercelline	Development Associate
Joro Walker	Utah Office Director
Ken Wilson	Engineering Fellow



[www.westernresourceadvocates.org](http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org)

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PROTECTING THE WEST'S LAND, AIR, AND WATER

2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200  
Boulder, CO 80302

Above: Red-tailed hawk's approach in the Front Range, Colorado.  
Front: Explosion of alpine flowers at Blue Lake,  
Indian Peaks Wilderness, Colorado.